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DEPT FOR EEB/TPP/MTAA/ABT FOR J.SPECK, G. CLEMENTS, AND D.
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TAGS: [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [SZ](#)
SUBJECT: SWISS RESPONSE: GLOBAL ACTION ON FOOD SECURITY

REF: STATE 58996

Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor R.Rorvig for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Econoff delivered reftel points to Federal Office of Agriculture (FOAG) Head of International Sustainable Agriculture Unit Francois Pythoud and Senior Officer Hubert Poffet. In general, Pythoud welcomed the new U.S. approach towards food security. He stated that the five principles as outlined in reftel tracked Switzerland's policy which was presented at the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Summit in Rome. According to Pythoud, the comprehensive strategy included the same elements and priorities as the Swiss approach. In addition, the Swiss concur with the need for solutions that address both long term sustainable food sources as well as short term emergency assistance. Pythoud commented that the Swiss also agree with embracing a partnership and country-led process. The Swiss support increased partnerships including private sector and research centers, as well as a better balance between family farming, which in Pythoud's opinion needed more support, and entrepreneurial farming.

¶2. (C) On a policy level, Pythoud stated that Switzerland is committed to 1) a process to revitalize the FAO's Food Security Committee at the FAO, which the Swiss concede has been to date inefficient as a policy platform; and 2) providing national support for the UN High Level Task Force on Global Food Security. Pythoud expressed surprise that the U.S. approach did not incorporate the High Level Task Force.

¶3. (C) Pythoud noted that Switzerland is not at a stage in which it can provide specific resource commitments for food security. The government is currently in a discussion to increase aid from the current 0.41 percent of GDP. Pythoud also referenced the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's (SDC) development assistance program, which also funds food security programs.

¶4. (C) Lastly, Pythoud commented that Switzerland is expecting the leaders at the G-8 summit to elaborate on and clarify the policy approach to food security with concrete programs and not just provide "ministerial speeches" that contain little details. Switzerland also hopes that the G-8 will move the discussion to a larger multi-lateral platform to give the signal that all international committees need to take action.
CARTER